



NEBRASKA NATIONAL GUARD

# NEWS RELEASE

Public Affairs Office - 1300 Military Road - Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1090

Phone: 402 309-7300 - Fax: 402 309-7306

**SECOND TIME MARATHON WINNER,  
DEPLOYED SOLDIER LEAD THE WAY  
FOR NATIONAL GUARD RUNNERS DURING  
35TH LINCOLN NATIONAL GUARD MARATHON**

**RELEASED BY  
Maj. Kevin Hynes**

By Senior Airman Mary E. Thach  
155th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs Office

May 8, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LINCOLN, Neb. – The rainy, humid morning air left a haze as lightning flashed across the sky and thunder rolled. A record crowd of thousands gathered in the streets outside of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Memorial Stadium, mentally and physically preparing themselves for the storm that was brewing within and the challenge that lay ahead.

Two hundred sixteen National Guard members representing 46 states and territories joined nearly 10,000 other running enthusiasts on the streets of Lincoln, Neb., May 6, as they competed in the 35th Annual Lincoln National Guard Marathon. And although lightning rarely strikes the same point twice, for one National Guard member it did, while another brought the thunder.

Army Capt. Robert Killian Jr., a member of the Colorado Army National Guard's 5-19th Special Forces Group, set the pace for all National Guard participants for the second year in a row, by completing 26.2 miles in 2 hours, 37 minutes, 35 seconds, less than a minute shy of his 2011 time. His time was good enough to place fifth overall and first among all National Guard runners.

"I'm feeling good, there was bad weather this morning and I was expecting the course to be pretty tough," said Killian. "Last year was my very first marathon I have ever done. To come out and run it two years in a row and win is great."

Running a rugged race is nothing new for Killian, who follows a rigorous training program by logging 40-50 miles per week at elevated altitudes, participating in bi- and triathlons – including the Ironman competition in Hawaii – and running a marathon in San Francisco. His goal is to continually improve.

"I want to come back next year," said Killian. "I want to try to get in the top three."

Killian said the weather during this year's race was a little rough in the morning, as the rain and wind creating challenging conditions. Still, Killian said, the wind actually worked in the runners' favor as a tail wind.

Eventually the sun came out, quickly increasing the temperature. Killian said he enjoyed the course and was glad he finished before it got too hot.

"It was a great course, but it's easy to just give up and be satisfied with seventh or sixth," said Killian. "You just have to keep up and try to get the Guards' name out there for a top five finish."

Also representing the National Guard well was Army Capt. Sara Day of the North Carolina Army National Guard who used her leave from a deployment to Kuwait to run in the marathon. Not only did she top all National Guard females, she came in second place for all female competitors with a time of 3:02:22.

Day said she joined the active Army as a professional runner. Initially, she focused on her occupation, but decided to change her focus back to running. She joined the Guard in 2008 and later tried out for the National Guard marathon team.

According to Day, she has competed in marathons previous to the Lincoln National Guard Marathon, but during this year's race she notched her second fastest marathon time. That time didn't come easy though. Actually, she said, it was far from it.

"I was feeling a lot of things. When I was running in mile 13, I was thinking 'I have not done nearly enough training in Kuwait to finish this marathon,'" said Day. "I was like, 'I can't quit.'"

When deployed, Day said she woke up every morning at 4 a.m. to run, then went to work for 8-10 hours. She said she wouldn't entertain the idea of quitting because of all the support she has back in Kuwait.

As if the marathon was not challenging enough, Day faced logistical and funding challenges just to be able to participate because of her deployment to Kuwait. Fortunately, she said her chain of command showed their full support and bent over backward to help her in any way they could.

The same could be said for the Lincoln race, said Day. She said although the temperature was a lot warmer than she wanted it to be, the course was perfect. She said the volunteers were very helpful and the water points were great, all helping her have a strong race.

She added that what she gains from running overflows into her work in the military.

"Physical fitness is the one thing that has taken me through my career," said Day. "Running has given me perseverance."

In the team event, the Pennsylvania National Guard won first place with their top three runners averaging a time of 2:52:30. The Wisconsin National Guard team followed in a close second with Oregon finishing in third place.

Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hagan, National Guard Bureau marathon coordinator, said that while the day was challenging because of the weather, it was ultimately another successful running of the annual race.

"This was a very tough course; some said they need to train on more hills," said Hagan. "It was very hot and it took a toll on their bodies. I don't think anyone doesn't feel that they didn't run hard today."

"The day started off with a big thunderstorm and high humidity," he added. "Overall, the heat came up and affected a lot of people today but it did not affect their determination to try to make the team. All in all, a great day"

Hagan said the Guard was well represented throughout the day on the course.

"I couldn't ask for anything better. They were out there giving 110 to 150 percent the entire time. I am overwhelmingly proud of what they did today," said Hagan. "They definitely represented the National Guard in the utmost highest fashion."

Captions for attached photos are as follows:

**120506-F-IC799-026:** Two hundred sixteen National Guard members representing 46 states and territories join nearly 10,000 other running enthusiasts on the streets of Lincoln, Neb., May 6, as they compete in the 35th Annual Lincoln National Guard Marathon. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Vern Moore)(Released)

**120506-F-IC799-384:** Army Capt. Sara Day of the North Carolina National Guard competes in the 35th annual Lincoln National Guard Marathon in Lincoln, Neb., May 6. Day used leave from a deployment to Kuwait to run in the marathon and took first place for all National Guard females and also came in second

place for all female competitors with her time of 3 hours, 2 minutes, 22 seconds. (U.S. Air Force photo by 2nd Lt. Alex Salmon)(Released)

**120506-F-ZO109-228:** Army Capt. Robert Killian Jr., a member of the Colorado Army National Guard's 5-19th Special Forces Group, competes in the 35th annual Lincoln National Guard Marathon in Lincoln, Neb., May 6. Killian set the pace for all National Guard participants for the second year in a row, with a time of 2 hours, 37 minutes, 35 seconds, which was also good enough to place fifth overall. (U.S. Air Force photo by 2nd Lt. Alex Salmon)(Released)

*Additionally, lists are attached that include the team and individual male and female National Guard award winners and the overall results with times are included.*